

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of processing Chinese kaolin, comprising providing Chinese kaolin wherein at least about 90% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 75 microns or less and from about 0.01% to about 90% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 2 microns or less, the Chinese kaolin having a higher carbon content, a lower iron oxide content, and a higher propensity to release alumina upon heating compared to Middle Georgia (U.S.A.) kaolin:

delaminating the Chinese kaolin to provide at least about 60% by weight of Chinese kaolin having an average particle diameter of about 2 microns or less; pulverizing the delaminated Chinese kaolin at least two times before heating; and

heating the at least twice pulverized Chinese kaolin at a temperature from about 450 to about 1200° C. for a time from about 1 minute to about 10 hours.

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the delaminated Chinese kaolin is pulverized at least five times before heating.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the delaminated Chinese kaolin is pulverized at least seven times before heating.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein delaminating the Chinese kaolin comprises forming a slurry comprising Chinese kaolin, grinding media, dispersants, and water and wet milling the slurry.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein after pulverization and before heating, at least about 80% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 2 microns or less.
6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising pulverizing the heated Chinese kaolin.
7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein providing Chinese kaolin having wherein at least about 90% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 60 microns or less and from about 0.1% to about 50% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 2 microns or less comprises,
8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising drying the delaminated Chinese kaolin before pulverizing the delaminated Chinese kaolin.
9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein drying comprises spray drying the delaminated Chinese kaolin.
10. (Currently amended) A method of processing Chinese kaolin, comprising providing Chinese kaolin wherein at least about 90% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 75 microns or less and from about 0.01% to about 90% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 2 microns or less, the Chinese kaolin having a higher carbon content and a higher propensity to release alumina upon heating compared to Middle Georgia (U.S.A.) kaolin;
delaminating the Chinese kaolin to provide the Chinese kaolin with a first bulk density;
pulverizing the delaminated Chinese kaolin at least two times before heating to provide the Chinese kaolin with a second bulk density, the second bulk density at least about 25% less than the first bulk density; and

heating the at least twice pulverized Chinese kaolin to form at least one of metakaolin, partially calcined kaolin, and calcined kaolin.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein at least about 90% by weight of the at least twice pulverized Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 2 microns or less and at least about 60% by weight of the at least twice pulverized Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 1 micron or less.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the delaminated Chinese kaolin is pulverized at least three times before heating.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the delaminated Chinese kaolin is pulverized at least nine times before heating.

14.-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently amended) Chinese kaolin Kaolin processed according to the method of claim 1, wherein the kaolin is processed to have an oil absorption of about 60 or more measured in accordance with ASTM D-1483-84.

21. (Currently amended) The Chinese kaolin according to claim 20, processed to have an oil absorption of about 85 or more measured in accordance with ASTM D-1483-84.

22. (Currently amended) The Chinese kaolin according to claim 20, processed to have a brightness of about 82 or more measured in accordance with TAPPI method T646 om-94.

23. (Currently amended) A method of processing Chinese kaolin, comprising

providing Chinese kaolin wherein at least about 90% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 75 microns or less and from about 0.01% to about 90% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 2 microns or less, the Chinese kaolin having a ~~high~~ higher carbon content and a ~~high~~ higher propensity to release alumina upon heating compared to Middle Georgia (U.S.A.) kaolin;

delaminating the Chinese kaolin to provide at least about 60% by weight of kaolin having an average particle diameter of about 2 microns or less;

pulverizing the delaminated Chinese kaolin at least two times before heating; and

heating the at least twice pulverized kaolin at a temperature from about 450 to about 1200° C. for a time from about 1 minute to about 10 hours.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the delaminated Chinese kaolin is pulverized at least five times before heating.

25. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein the delaminated Chinese kaolin is pulverized at least seven times before heating.

26. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein delaminating the Chinese kaolin comprises forming a slurry comprising Chinese kaolin, grinding media, dispersants, and water and wet milling the slurry.

27. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, wherein after pulverization and before heating, at least about 80% by weight of the Chinese kaolin has an equivalent spherical diameter of about 2 microns or less.

28. (Currently amended) The method of claim 23, further comprising pulverizing the heated Chinese kaolin.